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DEPARTMENT FOR M/PRI, AF/EX

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PRAIA SUPPORTS NSDD-38 FOR GSO AND IMO POSITIONS

REF: STATE 12030

Per reftel, Embassy Praia fully supports the addition of a GSO and IMO position to the USDH Staff ranks. The ICASS Council met on February 24, 2010 and unanimously approved the addition of a GSO position. The COM's answers are keyed to the reftel questions below.

1. Is the need for the proposed staffing change reflected in the most recent (or earlier) Mission Strategic Plans? If so, under which goal? If not, what circumstances have changed to justify this NSDD 38 proposal?

- Yes, Embassy Praia clearly needs the addition of one GSO and one IMO position. As members of the management support platform, both will facilitate and assist in making our priority MSP goals possible. In GSO, we currently have locally-engaged GSO carrying the full load of property, procurement, warehousing, facilities, leasing, and motor pool responsibilities singlehandedly. Although we were lucky enough to locate a person fluent in the local language as well as English, our current GSO specialist is unable to coordinate all of the services in keeping with the Universal Service Standards while meeting the procurement/property reporting requirements. Adding a full-time GSO will allow the section to meet the needs of the ICASS customers and improve the customer service to all serviced agencies.

- The IMO position is also a critical addition. Our Ambassador's OMS is currently occupying both the OMS and IMO roles simultaneously. She is the Mission's only direct-hire OMS and, since she is not an IMO specialist by training, she often requires assistance from regional support, AF/EX, or Frankfurt. As a result, we need to postpone required upgrades and other major communications projects for long periods until we have our occasional TDY support visits. We require an IMO specialist to oversee our communications system and ensure we remain on the network, as well as to help us advance our bilateral cooperation by way of our website, telephones, e-mail, and other communication tools. We strongly support both additions.

2. If the agency proposes to add staffing based on workload, are there other resources already present at post that are performing or could perform the function(s)?

- We are recommending the additions based on skill sets as well as workloads, and because there are no resources present that can assume additional responsibilities.

3. If a U.S. Direct-Hire position is requested, could the function be accomplished through the use of TDY visits, commercial contracts, host country nationals, American family members, third country nationals, resident Americans or other local hire personnel?

- Both of these tasks have been supported through regional visits and other temporary support, but have not been particularly successful. Praia has been fortunate thus far in being able to cover the GSO and IMO responsibilities in-house

with the use of heavy overtime and online assistance, but we are not able to continue our necessary work when we have a larger community to support and the same number of service providers occupying multiple roles on an ad hoc basis.

¶4. What specific administrative support, space, and funding arrangements are required to accommodate this staffing change? Please list the minimum ICASS cost centers in which the requesting agency must enroll.

- We will need to purchase office furniture for the new GSO position, but already have a work station available for the IMO. Both positions would require housing and housing furniture. The requesting agency is State, so the officers will have full enrollment in ICASS. We have submitted a request for additional space, which was mandated by the OIG in its 2009 report for reconfiguration of our sensitive chancery offices. The cleared Americans are authorized to work in these security sensitive floors.

¶5. Do the benefits of increasing post's presence outweigh the inherent security risks associated with additional personnel and their dependents?

- Yes, the benefits to our diplomatic presence far outweigh the risks at this low threat posting.

BROWN